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BANK CREDIT GROWTH PICKS UP AS ECONOMY REBOUNDS: RBI

Bank credit growth rose to 17.2% in September 2022 quarter from 7% in the year-ago period, the latest RBI data showed

DEPOSITS GROW 9.8% IN SEPTEMBER QUARTER

Aggregate deposits growth, which remained in the close range of 9.5-10.2% since June 2021, stood at 9.8% in September 2022. Since December 2020, bank branches in metropolitan centres have been recording higher annual growth than those in rural, semi-urban and urban areas. Private banks have been outpacing public sector banks in deposit mobilisation, the RBI said | P13

SAVINGS DEPOSITS AT 34.7% OF TOTAL

- As per the data, year-on-year growth in term deposits rose to 10.2% in September 2022 from 6.4% a year ago. Current and savings deposits growth moderated to 8.8% and 9.4% from 17.5% and 14.5%, respectively, a year ago. The share of savings deposit in total deposits stood at 34.7% in the latest quarter

74.8%

ALL-INDIA CREDIT-DEPOSIT RATIO IN SEPT 2022, UP FROM 73.5% A QUARTER AGO

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

GUN-POINT

Videograb of policemen trying to stop an armed mob that attempted to attack Aaftab Poonawala, accused in the Mehrauli murder case, in New Delhi on Monday

Can't sit on picks as you don't like collegium: SC

Raps law minister's comments; opposes cherry-picking of names

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

EXPRESSING deep anguish over the Centre failure to abide by the timelines laid down last year on appointments to the higher judiciary, the Supreme Court on Monday urged the Attorney General and Solicitor General of India to advise the government and ensure the law of the land is followed.

A bench of justices S K Kaul and A S Oka said, "Once the name is reiterated, that's the end of the matter of the law as it stands. When recommendation is made, you cannot hold back the name without stating the reason. It is frustrating the whole system. No court can see violation of its order."

Noting that out of 68 pending collegium recommendations, 21 were on hold for over one-and-a-half years, the bench said the delay may be linked to the Centre's unhappiness over the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) failing to pass muster in the SC.

"It appears to be an unhappiness of the government on the fact that NJAC didn't muster constitutional mandate. Sometimes they muster mandate and sometimes they don't. That cannot be a reason not to comply with law of the land. See the consequences, some law of yours may be upheld by the SC, there may be society that's unhappy by it, can that section of society say that they will not follow the law of the land," Justice Kaul said.

He added that the timelines had gone completely haywire.

The court took umbrage to Union law minister Kiren Rijiju's recent statement, "never say that the government is sitting on the files, then don't send the files to the government, you appoint yourself, you run the show then." Justice Kaul said, "Let us give them the power, we've no difficulty. I ignore all press reports, when someone high enough says let them do it themselves, then we'll do it ourselves. All I'm saying is it should not have come. It's an interview and it's difficult to deny what you say."

The bench said the Centre was crossing some rubicons by keeping names pending. It also criticised the cherry-picking of names from different lists, which affects seniority and hampers the quality of judicial appointment, which is in nobody's interest.

On April 20, 2021, a three-judge SC bench had laid down a broad timeline for appointments. It included IB submitting its report within 4-6 weeks from the date of recommendation of the HC collegium to the Centre; govt to forward file(s) to the SC within 8-12 weeks; and making appointment on SC collegium's recommendation immediately.

DON'T MAKE US TAKE A DECISION, SAYS BENCH

"For the last two months, the whole thing has come to a standstill... Please resolve it....Don't make us take a decision on this in the judicial side," the bench told the Attorney General and Solicitor General and posted the matter for further hearing on December 8

Religious freedom doesn't include fundamental right to convert, Centre tells SC

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

THE Centre on Monday told the Supreme Court that the right to freedom of religion enshrined under Article 25 of the Constitution does not include a fundamental right to convert people to a particular religion, not in the least if it is done through fraud, deception, coercion or allurement.

The Centre's submission came in response to a plea by lawyer and BJP leader Ashwini Upadhyay.

"The Union of India is cognizant of the gravity and the seriousness of the issue raised in the present writ petition. It is submitted that such enactments are necessary for protecting cherished rights of vulnerable sections of the society including women and economically and socially backward classes," the Centre's affidavit stated.

Upadhyay's plea had sought to declare religious conversions by means of fraud, threat, or monetary benefits as violative of fundamental rights.

The Supreme Court asked the Centre to get information from all states on the steps taken by them in this regard. "This is a very serious issue. There cannot be any forced conversion & that's what we are concerned of," a bench of Justices M R Shah and C T Ravikumar said.

Next hearing on Dec 5

While deferring hearing on the matter to December 5, the court asked the Centre to find out information on what the states have done in the matter. The bench said instead of issuing notice to each state, it was asking the Centre to collate info

The Centre said in its affidavit that Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Haryana already have a legislation to curb this practice.

Earlier, the bench had said that everyone has the right to freedom of religion but not by forced conversion, which it termed "a very dangerous thing". It added that such practices might affect the security of the nation.

Upadhyay's plea was filed against the backdrop of the suicide of 17-year-old Lavanya in Tamil Nadu.

40 Maha villages seek to merge with K'taka

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR @ Belagavi

AMID the ongoing tussle between leaders of Karnataka and Maharashtra over the simmering boundary dispute between the two neighbouring states, residents of 40 villages in Jath taluk in Sangli district on Maharashtra border, mostly inhabited by Kannadigas, have expressed their desire to see their areas merged with Karnataka.

Slamming the Maharashtra government for neglecting their villages for decades and depriving them of basic amenities like roads and irrigation facilities, the villagers said they would prefer to be part of Karnataka if the Maharashtra government continues to neglect them.

President of Umadi Niravari Horata Samiti in Jath taluk, Sunil Potdar said, "We have been demanding basic amenities in our villages in Jath taluk for the past decade, but in vain. Our demands have fallen on deaf ears. It's time that our villages are merged with Karnataka." He welcomed the recent statement of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai who backed the demand of Kannadigas for merger of their region, including Solapur and Akkalkot, with Karnataka.

A prominent local leader Shambu Mamadapur, also president of the Danamma Temple Trust of Guddapur in Jath taluk, said the villagers of Guddapur have been demanding the development of roads for several decades but the Maharashtra government has not done anything about it. People in most of these 40 villages are upset that the government has neglected Kannada schools and said that it was the Karnataka government which sanctioned Rs 15 crore for the development of schools in the border areas, besides giving grants for the construction of Kannada Bhavan in recent years. The villagers said the roads leading to Danamma Temple, one of the famous religious places in the region, are pathetic even as more than 10,000 devotees visit the shrine everyday. P4

2 Maha ministers to visit Belagavi

Maharashtra Higher Education Minister Chandrakant Patil and Excise Minister Shamburaj Desai will arrive in Belagavi to meet Marathi leaders on December 3. The meeting is expected to be organised by Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde faction) and MES.

CM may talk cabinet rejig with Nadda

With Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai scheduled to visit New Delhi on Tuesday, speculations are rife over cabinet rejig, as he may call on BJP national president JP Nadda. This has fanned rumours that the two may discuss cabinet expansion to fill six vacant seats. P4

CAMEROON COMEBACK

Assuming he was offside, Cameroon's Vincent Aboubakar went for the jugular, chipping the Serbia's goalkeeper Vanja Milinkovic-Savic for the team's second goal on Monday. In the first match, Cameroon came from 1-3 down to draw and keep their hopes alive | AP

GOAL RUSH

First two matches, 11 goals and one comeback. The World Cup went goal-crazy on the tournament's second Monday. A look at the matches | P17

KUDUS TO GHANA

After heart-breaking loss vs Portugal, Mohd Kudus did the star turn for Ghana, scoring a brace as they edged South Korea in a 5-goal thriller

BRAZIL ADVANCE

Brazil beat Switzerland 1-0 when Casemiro found the net in the second half. Brazil go through to the knockouts from Group G

Tuesday's fixtures

Group A: Netherlands vs Qatar, Ecuador vs Senegal 8.30pm. Group B: England vs Wales, Iran vs US 12.30pm

Rahul says both Gehlot, Pilot are assets

ANURAAG SINGH @ Bhopal

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday took the middle ground in the raging controversy over Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot calling his former deputy Sachin Pilot a traitor, saying both are assets for the party.

"I don't want to go into who is saying what, all I can say is both leaders (Gehlot and Pilot) are assets for the party. I can guarantee that whatever is going on in Rajasthan isn't going to affect the Bharat Jodo Yatra there," Rahul said in Indore.

Gehlot's barb was in retaliation to Pilot attacking him for the 'interesting' praise he drew from Prime Minister Narendra Modi during their recent meeting. To restore peace among the warring factions and insulate Rahul's yatra in Rajasthan from the fallout of the rift, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's emissary K C Venugopal will reach Jaipur on Tuesday. The Bharat Jodo Yatra is scheduled to enter Rajasthan next week.

A day earlier, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh had said the experience of Gehlot and the energy and youth of Pilot were equally important, adding he was surprised by the chief minister's choice of words for Pilot.

MAHE suspends prof for calling student 'Kasab'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Udupi

THE Manipal Institute of Technology (MIT) in Udupi suspended a professor after he allegedly called a student 'Ajmal Kasab', a Pakistani terrorist who was hanged in 2012 after being convicted in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack case which took place in 2008.

A video of the professor making the remark during a class last week has gone viral on social media. In the video, the first year engineering student whom the professor called 'Kasab' can be heard raising serious objection and telling him that it is not at all acceptable. "Will you talk to your son like this? Will you call him by the name of a terrorist? How can you call me like that in front of so many people in the class," the student tells the professor. The professor is heard telling "sorry dude" to which the student replies, "Sorry doesn't change how you think, how you portray yourself".

In a social media post, the student says that though the racist comment was not acceptable, he would however let it go as he believed that the professor did not mean it. "It can be ignored this time," he reportedly posted.

Acting swiftly, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) placed the professor under suspension and ordered an inquiry into the matter. In a communique, MAHE said that it does not condone such kind of behaviour and this isolated incident will be dealt with in accordance with the laid down policy of the institute.

Though there are no conclusive inputs throwing light on the background of this incident and why the professor made such a remark against a student, the incident reportedly happened in the classroom on the day of the anniversary of the November 26, 2008 terror attack in Mumbai.

In the 49-second video that went viral, the student can be seen taking strong objection to the remark. P4

"I had a conversation with the lecturer and realised that he genuinely meant apology. I understand what was going on in his head and would like to believe he didn't mean it... it can be ignored this time"

- The student

PROBLEM OF PLENTY

Excess rainfall hits sowing of rabi crops in state

SOWING STATS

Target area **26.68 LAKH HECTARES**

Achieved area **19.85 LAKH HECTARES**

In percentage **74.06%**

Data courtesy: Agriculture Department

"If sowing was done in September, harvesting could be done from January to March... The rain in November or December would help vegetation grow further"

G S Srinivasa Reddy, senior consultant with KSDMA

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

EXCESS rain during September and October this year has hampered sowing of rabi crops at many places in Karnataka. Rabi crops or rabi harvest, also known as winter crops, are agricultural crops that are sown in winter and harvested in spring in India. As on date, sowing in Karnataka has been done in 74 per cent of the total target area, which is likely to impact the yield.

All the major reservoirs in the state are full. State Agriculture Department had set a target of 26.68 lakh hectares for sowing of rabi crops, of which 74 per cent has been covered. Experts point out that excess rainfall has caused oversaturation of soil moisture affecting sowing of the crops this season. Even if they sow, seedlings will not survive due to heavily saturated soil. As per data available with Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre, during this year's monsoon (June to September), 20 districts of the total 31 districts of the state witnessed rainfall.

G S Srinivasa Reddy, senior consultant with Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) said, this year, the situation is peculiar. Because of heavy rain, there is more moisture in the soil which has not drained out at many places. During rabi season, jowar, wheat, bengal gram, and black gram, among others, are sown. "If sowing was done in September, harvesting could be done from January to March, depending on each crop. The rain in November or December would help vegetation grow further," he said.

EXPRESS READ

Second PU final exam timetable announced

Bengaluru: The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) has announced the final timetable for the 2nd PUC CBSE board examinations, scheduled to be held from March 9 to March 29. P5

India's SARAS telescope gives clues to first stars

New Delhi: India's SARAS radio telescope has helped scientists determine the properties of the earliest radio luminous galaxies formed 200 million years after the Big Bang, a period known as the Cosmic Dawn.

Woman abused, hit for not knowing Kannada

PRAVEEN KUMAR @ Bengaluru

A woman from Punjab was allegedly abused and beaten up by a group of women who accused her of not knowing how to speak Kannada. The incident happened near a government school at Doddabommasandra in Vidyaranyapura police station limits.

The victim Neelamjit Kaur (46), who is a stylist, owns a salon and spa in the city. She is from Ludhiana in Punjab. Kaur was surrounded by a group of angry women when she applied sudden brakes of her scooty in a bid to save a 7-year-old child.

She told the parents of the child to take care of the kid and not to leave him unattended on the road. This resulted in an argument and a group of women who started gathering began abusing her for not knowing Kannada. They even asked her to go away from Karnataka.

Frustrated over this, she started making a video of the unruly mob following which she was beaten by some women with a plastic pipe.

The group also pulled her hair. The incident happened between 10 pm and 10.15 pm on Friday.

"It appears that somebody who was not even involved in the initial argument passed a comment on Kaur that she does not know Kannada and that she is an outsider. Kaur was alone and did not find support from anyone. The allegation about her having been beaten by other women is being checked. We are examining the CCTV footage in the vicinity. Nobody has been arrested or taken into custody for questioning so far. The case is still under investigation. Those found guilty will be punished," a police officer, who is part of the investigation, told *The New Indian Express*.

The Vidyaranyapura police have registered cases under IPC 143 (unlawful assembly), IPC 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) IPC 324 (causing hurt by dangerous weapons).